

- unique to every reader

metaphor

"Every reader finds himself. The writer's work is merely a kind of optical instrument that makes it possible for the reader to discern what, without this book, he would perhaps never have seen in himself." ~Marcel Proust

In the novel Frankenstein, author Mary Shelley incorporates literacy on a multitude of levels, from learning to read, to consuming a variety of texts, and ultimately to both written and spoken communication. In a well-organized essay, analyze Shelley's focus on the power of words and its contribution to the meaning of the work as a whole. Avoid plot summary.

theme

motif

How does the motif create the theme?

motifs (topics): power of words  
nature vs nurture

theme:

The nature of a man is often profoundly influenced by the words encountered during his or her experiences with the world.

thesis: Through the use of literary foil, Mary Shelley juxtaposes the profound influences ~~on men~~ ~~of words~~ ~~two men encounter~~ have on Victor and the creature during their individual experiences in the world.

Literacy

letters to sister  
from Elizabeth  
Alphonse  
Cerviel

books - Ruins  
Lives  
Sorrows  
Paradise

Journal (produced?  
consumed)

primer  
authors Victor read/  
studied  
Cerviel and poetry  
conversation

Foil

Victor

Agrippa  
Paracelsus  
professors  
letters from loved  
ones

Creature

ruins  
Lives  
sorrows  
paradise  
journal  
primer

## I Consumption

- A. Pos  
letter from Cerviel  
primer
- B. Neg  
Victor's journal (creature reading)  
sorrows  
professor who chided Victor

## II Production

- A. Pos  
creature's narrative voice
- B. Neg  
Victor's journal

A catalyst for the change in a man's chemical make-up, language holds the power to transform the innate nature of a man to either a touch of the divine or a monstrosity. In the world of Frankenstein, the words both Victor and the creature encounter jolt them, leaving them both blasted pumps of what they could have been. Through the use of literary foil, Mary Shelley juxtaposes the profound mutations each character undergoes as a result of the words each ingests.<sup>(?)</sup>

Chemistry

elements

heat

fire

gaseous

solids

organic

periodic table

conversion?